

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) An electronic database used as a depository for electronic documents generated during E-commerce transactions, comprising:

means for automatically receiving an electronic document dynamically generated from information provided during an E-commerce transaction that has completed at an E-commerce server, which server is independent of the electronic database, whereby said electronic document stored at said electronic database cannot be modified by either party to the E-commerce transaction;

means for generating a document identifier (ID) for said received E-commerce generated electronic document, wherein said document ID is generated at said database;

means for storing said E-commerce generated electronic document with said document ID; and

means for transmitting said document ID to each party to said E-commerce transaction that produced said electronic document.

6. (canceled)

7. (previously presented) The electronic database of Claim 5, wherein said means for storing further comprises:

means for allowing a later read access to said E-commerce generated electronic document by a party to said E-commerce transaction; and

means for preventing modifications to said E-commerce generated electronic document after said document has been stored.

8-10. (canceled)

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11. (currently amended) A depository for ensuring authenticity of electronic documents generated during E-commerce transactions, said depository comprising:

means for enabling automatic receipt of an electronic document that is dynamically generated in response to a completion of an E-commerce transaction in which information utilized to generate said electronic document is provided, wherein said E-commerce transaction is completed at a server that is independent of said depository;

means for generating a document identifier (ID) to identify said E-commerce generated electronic document being stored at the depository, wherein said document ID is generated at said depository and is separate from a transaction ID assigned to the E-commerce transaction; and

means for storing said E-commerce generated electronic document in said depository along with said document ID that is utilized to reference and retrieve said electronic document from said depository.

12. (previously presented) The depository of Claim 11, wherein said storing means includes:

means for limiting a write access of said electronic document to a first access; and

means for restricting subsequent access to said electronic document to read-only access, such that no changes may be made to said electronic document once it has been stored.

13. (previously presented) The depository of Claim 11, further including:

means for controlling a read and write access to said electronic depository, wherein said electronic document is stored in a write-once, read-many format;

means for providing said document ID to each party of the E-commerce transaction; and

means for later retrieving said electronic document for read access by a party to said E-commerce transaction utilizing said document ID.

14. (currently amended) The depository of Claim 13 wherein said controlling means further includes:

means for enabling a non-modification function for said electronic document, wherein a control code of said electronic depository is activated to prevent later modification to said electronic document; and

when said depository also stores other documents that are not generated by the E-commerce transactions, means for flagging each E-commerce generated electronic document stored within said electronic depository to allow only a later read access to said E-commerce generated electronic document by a party to said E-commerce transaction, wherein write access is permitted for said other documents that are not flagged.

15-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) The electronic database of Claim 5, further comprising:

means for connecting said electronic database to a separate, independent server at which said E-commerce transactions are conducted; and

means for enabling communication between said server and said electronic database via said connecting means.

20. (currently amended) The depository of Claim 11, further comprising:

means for connecting said depository to a separate, independent server at which said E-commerce transactions are conducted; and

means for enabling communication between said server and said depository via said connecting means.

21. (New) The depository of Claim 11, further comprising:

means for enabling client subscription to said database, said client subscription enabling a client to store electronic documents/contracts generated by e-commerce transactions entered into by said client at a server, whereby the electronic documents/contracts are automatically

transmitted to the database from the server at which the E-commerce transaction is completed when the client has said client subscription.

22. (New) The depository of Claim 11, further comprising:

means for enabling server subscription to said depository, said server subscription enabling a server application to store, at said depository, electronic documents/contracts generated by e-commerce transactions entered into by a client at said server, whereby the electronic documents/contracts are automatically transmitted to the depository from the server at which the E-commerce transaction is completed when the server has said server subscription.

23. (New) The depository of Claim 11, further comprising:

means for time-limiting said stored E-commerce generated electronic documents wherein said stored electronic documents/contracts are time-limited; and

means for removing said electronic documents/contracts from said depository after a preset time period has elapsed since the electronic document was stored.

24. (New) The electronic database of Claim 5, further comprising:

means for enabling client subscription to said database, said client subscription enabling a client to store electronic documents/contracts generated by e-commerce transactions entered into by said client at a server, whereby the electronic documents/contracts are automatically transmitted to the database from the server at which the E-commerce transaction is completed when the client has said client subscription.

25. (New) The electronic database of Claim 5, further comprising:

means for enabling server subscription to said database, said server subscription enabling a server application to store, at said electronic database, electronic documents/contracts generated by e-commerce transactions entered into by a client at said server, whereby the electronic documents/contracts are automatically transmitted to the database from the server at which the E-commerce transaction is completed when the server has said server subscription.

26. (New) The electronic database of Claim 5, further comprising:

means for time-limiting said stored E-commerce generated electronic documents wherein said stored electronic documents/contracts are time-limited; and

means for removing said electronic documents/contracts from said electronic database after a preset time period has elapsed since the electronic document was stored.

27. (New) The electronic database of Claim 5, further comprising:

means for enabling a non-modification function for said electronic document, wherein a control code of said electronic database is activated to prevent later modification to said electronic document; and

when said depository also stores other documents that are not generated by the E-commerce transactions, means for flagging each E-commerce generated electronic document stored within said electronic database to allow only a later read access to said E-commerce generated electronic document by a party to said E-commerce transaction, wherein write access is permitted for said other documents that are not flagged.